

THE FAIR!

The Fair—the Fair, come let us sing!
 Where youth and strength together meet,
 And beauty comes, her wealth to fling,
 All stars and sunshine at the feet
 Of dark-browed Toil, whose eye of fire
 Lights up the face of busy Time,
 Proud of his first born son, the sire
 Of ancient gods and arts sublime,
 Who scatters with a generous hand
 Peace, health, and plenty o'er the land.

Mules, oxen, horses, cows and hogs,
 Devon, Durham, Ayrshire shine.
 Plows, mills, saws, wheels, whose thundering cogs
 Go round and round. Embroidery fine,
 With nimble fingers, swift as thought,
 Her work glows on in mazy whirls;
 With stars and sunbeams, mystery-wrought,
 Matrons, swift boys, and glorious girls,
 On twenty acres, doubly jammed,
 Are pinching, pushing, crowding, crammed.

Labor! maker of States art thou!
 Minerva shows thy shining towers;
 The Muses bind around thy brow,
 Art, genius, beauty, golden flowers.
 Whose hand but thine the dragon tames,
 Yoked to the car by Ceres given?
 Fires of thine hearth are altar flames,
 Rising into the courts of Heaven.
 Brave as the tempest, strong and free,
 God made the Universe for thee.

Labor, work on! God works for thee—
 Bridges the night with golden bars,
 Pours from his hand the glorious sea,
 Flings from his throne the lightning stars.
 Ten thousand thousand millions deep,
 Do worlds on worlds shoot out afar;
 Imagination onward sweep,
 Still—still, beyond a twinkling star,
 Still—still beyond, His feet hath trod;
 Thy great Co-laborer, man, is God.

Be not ashamed of labor. God,
 The earth, sea, lightning, flood, and fire,
 Insect, beast, bird, the teeming sod,
 Are full of work. Work on, nor tire
 Of God and Angels' company;
 Rich Idleness hath vices—fine
 Companions hers. But let me be,
 Sweet Labor, God's Angels' and thine;
 The world is thine, belongs to thee,
 Wealth, virtue, life, Eternity.

But oh that girl, her glowing feet!
 I wonder if she pinched my toe?
 What golden clouds her hair! how sweet
 Her lips! such grace—her manner so
 Out-beaming all things else! I swear
 The glory of her eye would tell
 A thousand monarchs they might share
 Its light of light, nor half so well
 Their proudest diadem should shine,
 As flashing back its deep dark mine.

But stop Pegasus—not so fast!
 Through dusky dust the sun looks fire,
 All red and round; the billows vast
 Roll back. Huge men and asses dire,
 The girls with crazy bonnets on,
 Lifting their kirtles up like light,
 Satin, red, blue, pink colored fawn,
 Twinkling to petticoats of white;
 Beauty, art, work, machinery rare—
 Flash, roar, run mad—hurrah the Fair!

But North Carolina's glories sung,
 Swift thought must wing a thousand pens;
 The clouds disperse that overhung
 Her gold-packed hills and sunny glens;
 School houses warming up old fields,
 Corn, cotton, rice, and fiery tar,
 Fruits, tastes, the richest climate yields,
 Bright looking, doubling, tripling are
 All flushed with youth and scorning space,
 Steam, lightning, railroads, thunder, race.

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